

REFERENCES

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4. THE SMALL MONGOOSE FEEDING ON DROPPINGS OF NILGAI

On 23-iv-1988, while I was taking a census of peafowl in Roadside Plantation on S. H. 14 near village Tatarpur in Alwar District, I came across a small Indian mongoose (*Harpistes auropunctatus*) at 1800 hrs, which was wandering under ground cover in the plantation. I kept silent, hiding behind a tree trunk to observe the mongoose's activity. Soon it crossed the road and came towards me under the same *Acacia nilotica* tree whose trunk was serving me as a hide.

After some search, it came to a heap of droppings of Nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*) lying in the shade of the tree. Soon it picked up one pellet, holding it between its two fore-arms in a squirrel-like manner and completely ate it. While it was trying for a second feed, a motor cycle passed on the road which disturbed the animal and I could not watch further activity.

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5. AERIAL FEEDING BY MEDIAN EGRET (*EGRETTA INTERMEDIA*), LITTLE EGRET (*EGRETTA GARZETTA*) AND POND HERON (*ARDEOLA GRAYII*)

During August and September, near most of the sluice gates of Keoladeo National Park, Bharatpur, I observed a strange feeding behaviour of egrets and pond herons. This is the time when the Irrigation Department supplies water to the Sanctuary from the Ajanbundi reservoir. This year they started supplying water from 23rd July, 1985. Diagonally placed sluice gates regulate the flow of water into various blocks. Along with water,

schools of fish fry also enter the Sanctuary. During this period, I observed the aerial feeding behaviour of the median egret, little egret and pond heron. The area where this behaviour was noticed was a clear sheet of fast flowing, deep, open water. Five to ten cm. long fish used to leap into the air, apparently throughout the day. Several dead and living *Acacia* trees, overhung this area. Almost every day, I saw about 20 to 25 egrets and